

CONTROLLER STEVE WESTLY

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

300 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916.445.2636
www.controller.ca.gov

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CONTACT: RUSS LOPEZ
916-445-2636

FTB Approves Motion to Expand Successful ReadyReturn Program

Completed tax return pilot received 97 percent positive responses

SACRAMENTO -- State Controller and Franchise Tax Board (FTB) Chair Steve Westly today announced a unanimous vote by the Franchise Tax Board to expand the state's ReadyReturn program.

"Just about every ReadyReturn review we received was positive," Controller Westly said. "Thousands of Californians took advantage of an easy, innovative and painless way to file taxes. Now it's time to extend this opportunity to even more taxpayers."

ReadyReturn is an FTB pilot program started this past tax season. It provided 50,000 taxpayers a *completed* tax return for them to simply print, review, sign and send. More than 10,000 taxpayers have taken advantage of the program since its mid-February launch.

For next year's tax season, the FTB will place an open invitation to participate in ReadyReturn in 540 2EZ tax booklets, which will reach 800,000 people. Next year's program is expected to attract 30,000 participants.

"The ReadyReturn provides a valuable option for taxpayers who can either choose to use it or file their returns themselves or with the help of tax professionals or commercial software products," said John Chiang, Board of Equalization chair and FTB member.

Completed ReadyReturns were mailed to taxpayers whose filing status is single, includes no dependents, take the standard deduction, have only one employer, and whose only source of income is wages.

The FTB designed the program to ease the filing burden on taxpayers who file the simplest returns. ReadyReturn used information already provided to the state by employers, such as W-2 data.

Taxpayers were given the choice to mail the completed return or e-file it via the ReadyReturn Website at www.ftb.ca.gov. Taxpayers could also choose to ignore the FTB's invitation and file in the conventional manner.

The three-member Franchise Tax Board is comprised of State Controller Steve Westly, who serves as chair, the Director of the Department of Finance and the Chair of the State Board of Equalization.

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